

## Attachment A

### Project Plan

The Swordfish Deep Buoy Set Gear (DSBG) experimental fishery is a low-bycatch alternative to traditional commercial gear targeting swordfish, pelagic longlines and drifting gillnets. DSBG reduces bycatch by setting beneath the thermocline, where non-targeted species are uncommon. Importantly, for every fisher that transitions from traditional longline and gillnet fisheries to the DSBG fishery, the amount of high-risk gear in the water decreases.

A major challenge to the transition to this fishery is the limitation to relocate the gear in rough or foggy conditions, and at night. For DSBG, one vertical line is attached to a floating buoy with a hook set at the target depth. When multiple buoys are set simultaneously, they can drift apart or when a fish is hooked it can drag the connected buoy out of sight of the other buoys. In these instances, it is not uncommon for fishers to spend hours searching for buoys and gear can be lost. Lost gear can become ghost gear, which would then indiscriminately fish both target and off-target species for years.

However, by using smart buoys, fishers will always know exactly where their lines are and can quickly recover them. This not only prevents any from being lost, but drastically decreases the amount of time spent looking for gear, increasing the catch rate. In addition, they do not have to constantly visually spot their gear which improves the fishing experience by decreasing their exposure to dangerous conditions on deck. Last swordfish season, 2022-23, three vessels fished successfully using smart buoys and more vessels have requested interest in adopting the technology.

This funding opportunity fully outfits two swordfish DSBG vessels registered to an Experimental Fishing permit off the coast of southern California with Blue Ocean Gear Farallon Smart Buoys. Each vessel will receive ten Smart Buoys and 1 Wireless Charger, a software plan, initial training in their use, and technical support throughout the fishing season, September 2023 to March 2024. Updates will be provided after implementation, after the season, and the beginning of the next

## **Project Timeline**

### Product Acquisition (October 2023):

Farallon Smart Buoys from Blue Ocean Gear will be purchased within 48 hours of receipt of donation.

Ten Farallon Smart Buoys will be purchased for each participating vessel. Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Foundation (SFPF) will be responsible for all financial transactions related to this project with Blue Ocean Gear.

### Training and Implementation (October/November 2023):

Farallon Smart Buoys will be installed, and captain/crew training will be completed within two weeks of purchase. The time required per vessel is 2-4 hours for initial installation and training and 1-2 hours per month ongoing support. Installation, training, and ongoing support will be conducted by Blue Ocean Gear.

The implementation timeline can begin mid-season as there are already captains accustomed to working closely with the Farallon Smart Buoy provider, especially around short timelines when vessels are in port.

Blue Ocean Gear is responsible for providing documentation (photos/videos) of installation of equipment and training on vessels.

### End of Season Report (April/May 2024):

Blue Ocean Gear will provide a comprehensive end of season report. This is expected to be available in April 2024 or estimated 90 days after the end of season. DSBG season is expected to end in January 2024. In the scenario that the fishery is extended, an interim report will be expected no later than May 2024.

End of Season report will include documentation of all endangered, threatened, and protected species bycatch, an estimate of catch totals, any issues/malfunctions of the smart buoys, and feedback from the captain and crew (including likelihood to continue using the smart buoys in future seasons).

Blue Ocean Gear is responsible for providing documentation (photos/videos) of equipment in use and examples of caught fish. Any ETP bycatch landed and considered dead will need to be documented with a photo.

### Beginning of Season Report (August/September 2024):

A beginning of season report will be due at the opening of the 2024-2025 DSBG swordfish season highlighting continued use of the Farallon Smart Buoy.

1. SFPP Responsibilities:

A. SFPP Activities:

- (i) SFPP will provide funding to Blue Ocean Gear to purchase the Farallon Smart Buoys, wireless chargers, satellite data plans, and fund training (as specified above)
- (ii) SFPP will be responsible for uploading project reports, data etc. onto the Bycatch Solutions Hub
- (iii) SFPP will be responsible for providing updates on the project to Donor

2. Recipient Responsibilities:

A. Recipient Activities:

- (i) Project Management + Coordination.
- (ii) Supplying 2 vessels with 10 Farallon Smart Buoys each, providing installation and training, and providing the specified amount of product support.
- (iii) Comply with Reporting methodology (collecting information on the use/compliance with bycatch mitigation devices, catch/discard rates of ETP species etc.) required and developed by SFPP.
- (iv) Provide SFPP with three specified reports
  - a. Installation and Training (November 2023)
  - b. End of 2023 Season Report (April/May 2024)
  - c. Beginning of 2024 Season Report (August/September 2024)
- (v) Provide updates in connection with the Project and shall provide evidence by appropriate means such as reports, photos, videos, testimonials, etc.

B. Recipient Reporting: Recipient shall provide SFPP with regular, in any case quarterly, updates in connection with the Project and shall provide evidence by appropriate means such as reports, photos, videos, testimonials, etc.

Recipient understands communications regarding the Project will be hosted on the Bycatch Solutions Hub webpage, archived as SFPP deems necessary, and maintained for so long as the Bycatch Solutions Hub is generally maintained.